

SENATE RESOLUTION 1

By Blackburn

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Vice Admiral William P. Lawrence, U. S. Navy Retired, upon his receipt of the United States Naval Academy Alumni Association Distinguished Graduate Award 2000.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who through their valor and extraordinary efforts have distinguished themselves as military leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such exemplary person is Vice Admiral William P. Lawrence, who recently received the United States Naval Academy (USNA) Alumni Association's Distinguished Graduate Award 2000; and

WHEREAS, he will be honored by the Nashville Chapter of the USNA on January 13, 2001; following Vice Admiral Lawrence's remarks, a video of the award presentation from Memorial Hall will be shown; and

WHEREAS, the United States Naval Academy Alumni Association announced Vice Admiral Lawrence's deserved tribute and highlighted his career achievements in its October edition of the Alumni Magazine, *Shipmate*; and

WHEREAS, Vice Admiral William P. Lawrence, a former president of the Class of 1951, graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy as a recipient of the gold medal from the National Football Foundation and the Hall of Fame and winner of the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Theodore Award; and

WHEREAS, while at Annapolis, Vice Admiral Lawrence developed the honor concept for the Brigade of Midshipmen, a concept which has stood the test of time; and

WHEREAS, he placed first in his class at Naval Test Pilot School and was the first naval aviator to fly twice the speed of sound in a Navy plane; and

WHEREAS, Vice Admiral William P. Lawrence showed remarkable courage while serving in Vietnam, when his jet was shot down over enemy territory and he was captured by the North Vietnamese; and

WHEREAS, as a prisoner of war he was a source of strength to his fellow captives as senior-ranking officer during his six years at Camp Vegas, and was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for his courage; and

WHEREAS, Vice Admiral Lawrence, after a sixty-day stay in solitary confinement while a POW, composed "Oh Tennessee, My Tennessee," which was designated and adopted as the Official State Poem by the 88th General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, after his return from Vietnam he continued to serve our nation, first as the Assistant Deputy Chief of Naval Operations and later as Commander of the U.S. Third Fleet in the Pacific; and

WHEREAS, Vice Admiral Lawrence later returned to the Naval Academy where he served as Superintendent from 1978 to 1981; and

WHEREAS, it has been said that during his tenure as Superintendent he was able to remember the name of every face he knew and that he was conscientious in his care of all midshipmen; and

WHEREAS, following his tour as Superintendent, Vice Admiral Lawrence worked as the Chief of Naval Personnel and after many years of honorable service to his country he retired from the Navy in 1986; and

WHEREAS, he continued to serve his country well after his retirement as Chair of the Naval Leadership Department, where he advised Naval Academy staff, sculpted leadership courses and materials, and served as a guest lecturer; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting for the USNA Alumni Association to honor Vice Admiral Lawrence, for he is an exemplary graduate of the academy, and it is fitting for the Tennessee General Assembly to recognize his contributions to this country as a native Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, Vice Admiral William P. Lawrence wrote: "Oh Tennessee, My Tennessee/ What Love and Pride I Feel for Thee;" we as an assembly and representatives of the people of this state feel love and pride for him, not only because of his receipt of the Distinguished Graduate Award, but also in appreciation of the years he has devoted to the Navy and our nation; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge Vice Admiral William P. Lawrence for his accomplishments, honors, and dedication to the United States of America, the Navy and its men and women; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby honor and commend Vice Admiral William P. Lawrence for his meritorious service to this state and nation, and congratulate him upon his deserved receipt of the USNA Alumni Association's Distinguished Graduate Award 2000, and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.